775 through an evolution towards deity, as his corpse was decaying in the
765 grave, and the closing of his hut, with the placing of his shield before the door, might well mean his definite incorporation into the world of the dead, and also a means of preventing him from returning to this world and bringing misfortune to his relatives.

765 As regards the relatives, they separate from the former phase by the
783 cutting of the hair, putting out the old fire, leaving off their clothing and wearing mourning attire. A very distinct period of margin then begins, marked by the sexual taboos accompanying it, and they are aggregated again to the ordinary world and to the new phase of their life by all the ceremonies which I have explained at length. Here, however, as the seclusion was caused by a certain most dreaded defilement, the aggregation rites all bear the character of removal of uncleanness: uncleanness of the food, of the gardens, of the bereaved, chiefly grave-diggers and widows, of the whole community, which is cleansed by the sexual rite of hlamba ndjaka, etc.

797 If classification were equivalent to understanding, we might say that
761 we have fairly well understood the complicated Thonga rites which accompany death... But who can boast of having fully understood so profound and mysterious a subject? Death is the great shadow which hovers over life and chills the human heart. Outside of an enlightened faith, it is, and remains, the King of Terrors. Never more than at the graveside did I pity my poor black brethren, wondering how they tried to calm their hearts and overcome their sorrow. There is something profoundly touching in their most absurd rites, because, after all, they are all imposed by a craving for life and purity. Will my readers allow me to conclude this subject by a personal reminiscence? The day I attended the burial of Sokis, when his relatives had finished filling in the grave, they asked me to lead them in worship. Bantu heathenism is so poor, it feels itself so weak that it readily accepts the help of a higher religion. So I tried to turn the eyes of my hearers away from the underground hut, and to fix them on the eternal dwellings of the Father's house. Then Sokis's youngest brother took the nkanye twig and performed the heathen religious ceremony, calling his ancestors to come and bless them and entreating the deceased to leave them in peace. The contrast between these two prayers made at the same grave was indeed striking. And, whatever we may think, even if we had no religious convictions at all, should we not earnestly desire that, for these people, the bright comforting Christian hope may dispel the darkness of their thoughts and the sufferings involved in their rites?

714 heavily or stamped his feet on the ground, it sounded like the tread of an elephant.

714 This costume is a warm one, and the warrior carries a sort of
321 bone curry-comb, made of the rib of an ox, shaped and sharpened,
302 which he uses to scrape the perspiration from his face and body, when taking violent exercice or indulging in the dances descriptive of his prowess. Such is the native pocket-handkerchief!

714 The several component parts of the war-dress are kept in a little hut raised on poles, near the owner's dwelling, and are carefully looked after, being frequently dusted and exposed to the sun to preserve them from moths and weevils. A complete uniform is worth several pounds sterling!

713 *Arms* among the Ba-Ronga are of a very primitive kind, those
411 of most ancient date being doubtless the *club* (nhonga) and the *knobkerrie* (gungwe) (1) of which two specimens are given in the accompanying illustration (No. 4). The Native never journeys without his stick, using it to kill snakes, should any cross his path, and should fortune smile on him, to knock over any quail that may rise at his feet. In quarrels or in war time this *nhonga* can be a dangerous weapon. The stick with the fluted head comes, I am told, from Bilen, and it seems that this style is in great favour in Gaza. It may have a phallic significance.

But the most formidable weapon of the South African Black is the *assagai* (tlhari, fumo (No. 2), of which there are two kinds ; the larger (likhalo) consisting of a sharp, pointed, double edged steel blade, fixed on to a stick with iron or brass wire, and the smaller (tindjombi) with a blade of the size of our arrow-head, fastened to the handle with strips of bark or of palm leaves. The former is for hand-to-hand combat, and the warrior never releases his hold of it, while the latter—of which three or four may be held in the hand when entering the fight—are thrown at the enemy from a distance (2). The length of the large assagai on the right of the illustration is as follows : Blade 14 inches ; binding of iron

797 (1) These sticks were given to me as dentistry fees for the extraction of decayed
713 teeth !

(2) I once had an opportunity to observe the effects of the assagai. A young evangelist of our Mission was surprised on the railway line by some Zihlahla warriors

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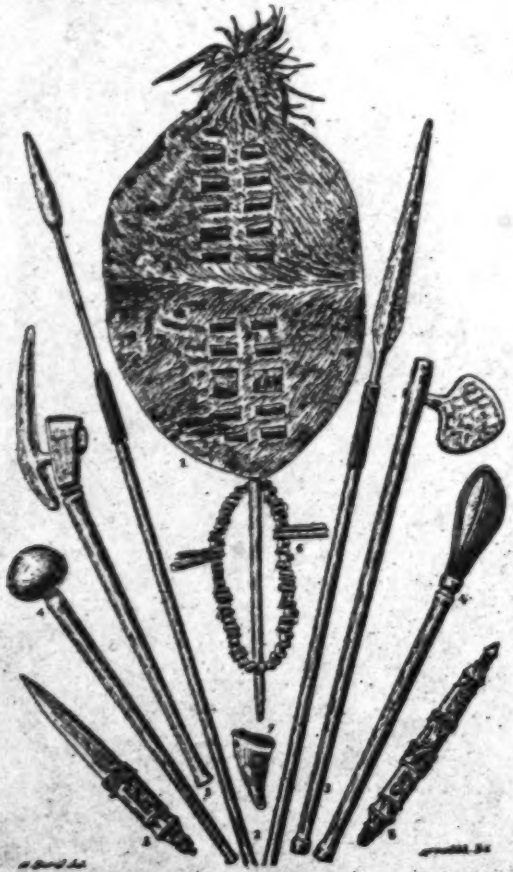
2/11 wire, 4 ½ inches and handle 34 ½ inches. The small one, on the left, measures: blade 7 in., iron stem adjoining blade 7 in., binding



Thonga weapons.

1. Shield; 2. Assagais; 3. Battle axes;
4. Knobkerries; 5. Dagger; 6 and 7. Necklaces
and little bows worn by men always.

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713 in ambush during the 1894 war, and was transfixed at one blow. (7 th January 1895). He had fallen on his knees and the wretches struck him in the back; the assagai was only prevented from going right through his body by a note book which he was carrying in the breast pocket of his coat.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

APPENDIX V (See p. 226)

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As an example of *the absolute obedience due to the father*, I may quote the testimony of the Rev. Calvin Maphophe, one of the Native ministers of the Swiss Mission, now living in Lourenço Marques. It illustrates vividly the painful conflict which takes place in the heart of a Bantu boy when he is faced with the dilemma of either obeying a heathen father who forbids him to become a Christian, or going against the paternal will and joining the Church.

One day one of the little shepherds belonging to Maphophe's village in the Spelonken brought to his comrades an astonishing piece of news. He had gone to the missionary station and heard a white man say that there is a God in heaven and that this God created all things. His words were received with absolute incredulity by the company of [773] boys herding the goats ; they answered : "It is an impossibility! Do we not know that the first man and woman came out of a reed ?" However young Matsivi (this was the name of Calvin Maphophe) and his brother Shihosi wished to set their minds at rest about the matter and they began to attend the service on Sundays. They were so struck by the message heard in the little church that they decided to learn more of this extraordinary teaching of the White people, and every Sunday they went to the Station. One of the men of the tribe informed their father that they were assiduous attendants at the Christian services. Maphophe called together all the men of his village and summoned the two boys before this tribunal. Pointing his finger at them he said : "These boys have dared to go to the White people and hear things which are dangerous to us. We do not wish them to become insane! Take it to heart both of you. It is over. Henceforth you must never go again to the village of the Whites. If you disobey, you will be beaten."

The two boys were terribly moved by their father's words. It is a recognised principle in the Bantu tribe that a child who wishes to do right must obey his father, and they were anxious to behave well... But the attraction they felt for the new teaching was too great. They solved the problem by running away from their home. This is not the place to tell the end of the story. It may be found in a little pamphlet "Le Pasteur Calvin Mapopé" published by the headquarters of the Swiss Romande Mission (2, Chemin des Cèdres, Lausanne).

164 bi-monthly *biyeketa* nor the powder of the reed can do anything to
751 prevent them. The habit of always carrying water in the calabash and
177 of never emptying it entirely is harmful. Dr Garin, our medical missionary, examined some of these milombyana calabashes with the microscope and found them full of bacteria of all kinds. It is a splendid *milieu de culture* for them. This milombyana custom is however hard to eradicate as the principle is deeply rooted in the Thonga mind : "The child grows by means of medicine" and even Christian converts respect it. They will relinquish it when a clearer notion of medical science has entered their heads — a time which is still remote, I fear!

000 From the missionary point of view, let us notice the analogy between the rite of the broken pot and Christian baptism as administered to children by most of the Churches. Natives readily accept a ceremony of benediction for the little ones, be it baptism proper or presentation with laying on of hands. But the heathen baptism is a baptism of smoke, and not of water — and is in relation to merely external dangers, while the Christian rite represents the purification of the soul from its sin and the new and pure life. Whatever may be the difference between the two customs, we find in the animistic rite a point of analogy which may help us to explain the spiritual sacrament and its deep significance.

II. ON CIRCUMCISION (See p. 94).

177 What judgment are we to pass on this custom to which some tribes
797 still cling with great pertinacity ? The teaching of endurance and of hunting has certainly some value, but these rites as a whole have very little worth and are useless in the new economy of South Africa. The obcene language allowed during the Ngoma certainly tends to pervert the mind of the boys and constitutes an immoral preparation for sexual life.

Have we nothing to learn from the Ngoma ? More than two hundred thousand children of black South Africa are now attending our schools... more or less regularly. Hundreds of young men are boarding in our Normal Institutions. Do we always succeed in this great educational work ? Its results are not entirely satisfactory, because most of the children do not stay long enough in the school to be properly taught. As soon as they have acquired some knowledge of reading and writing, they leave and go to the towns to earn money.

177 Whatever the teacher may say, they escape... I must confess that we do not control them as well as the Father of the Circumcision... The Ngoma shows us however that strict discipline is quite possible with Native boys and that we must deal with them without any touch of harshness, of course, but with a firm hand. When the inmates of our institutions complain that the sauce of their porridge is not savoury enough, we might remind them of the food their heathen comrades are eating in the Ngoma!

881 There is a striking resemblance between Bantu circumcision, Jewish circumcision and Christian baptism.

In Jewish circumcision, the same physical operation was performed, but it was performed on infants. It had undoubtedly also the meaning of a purification, a removal of pollution and an introduction into the holy nation. In the course of time, the idea was spiritualised and circumcision meant the removal of sin. But it had a strongly religious character: Jahvé marked his chosen people by their circumcision. This religious element is wanting in the Ngoma of the Thongas and the Suthos, where the national significance alone remains.

As regards baptism, the great difference between the heathen and the Christian rite is evidently this. Christian baptism is not only a religious but also a moral rite. In its normal form, which is the immersion of adult catechumens, it represents in a striking manner the washing away of sin and the admission to the Church of Christ; it is a rite of passage; separation from the old life of sin, marginal period of instruction, admission into a holy community...

The Ngoma has no such spiritual and moral idea attached to it, but it has been inspired by the same deep and true sense of the necessity in the evolution of man, of a progress consisting in the renunciation of a miserable past and the introduction into a higher life. This idea is one of those rays of light which we are happy to discover amidst the darkness of heathendom, one of those "points d'attache" to which we can link the truths of spiritual religion.

177 797 881 What ought to be the attitude of the Government and of Missions towards this custom? As regards Governments, they could not immediately suppress the circumcision schools, though they have often been asked to do so, but it would seem that they might use their influence in checking them. As for the Mission, it has naturally fought against this school of heathenism, but not always with success; boys, even Christian boys, are wonderfully attracted by it and many have left their

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

177 spelling-books for the formulæ of Manhengwane. Strange to say, it
797 frequently happens that girls refuse to marry men who have not passed
through this initiation! These facts, together with the legitimate wish
881 to give African Christianity a true national character, have suggested to some missionaries the idea of establishing *Christian Circumcision Schools*. In a special meeting at the Conference of Le Zoute, September 1926, Canon Lucas of the Universities Mission told his colleagues the results of an experiment of this kind at his station of Masasi. The missionary himself took control of all proceedings. The boys began by entering the church, the elders representing the old men of the tribe. They were circumcised in the camp which had been previously blessed and the operation was performed by a qualified Native who had been trained by medical men. The parents of the boys were waiting outside the camp, dancing. When all the boys had been circumcised, they were told by the manager of the camp that this was done to incorporate them into the tribe, and the parents again engaged in a big dance. The men remained on the spot and proceeded to the erection of the buildings of the camp where the circumcised were kept for some weeks, and carefully treated till all of them were healed. During this period of seclusion, they received instead of the obscene formulæ, teaching bearing on seven subjects : truth, honour, purity, abstinence from drink, humility, love of one's neighbour and duties toward God. They had also to pass through various physical trials, and, at the end, they were exhorted to do penance for their past sins. Their hair was cut, and burnt together with their clothing and all the camp buildings. The parents were then summoned and danced the whole night, the men mysteriously bringing new clothing for the initiated. The boys then went to church, and, answering a question put by the missionary, they said : "I ask of God that I may be a righteous man." A special blessing was then given to them. An interesting fact is that the heathen population approved of this Christian Circumcision School and accepted it as an equivalent to the old. Some heathen parents even sent their sons to it! Seven hundred boys have already been received in it and Canon Lucas has gained an enormous influence over them! I only
000 mention this attempt to "sublimate" the circumcision rites. Some missionaries are strongly opposed to this new departure, which they regard as a dangerous mixture of Christian ideas and heathen rites. Without expressing a definite opinion on the subject, I would insist on the point just mentioned : the real, genuine rite of passage of Christianity is baptism, and the African Church might perhaps be satisfied with

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

797/177 *d) Mission work*, now so wide-spread all over the country, leads to the same result. It infuses a new moral and religious ideal into the minds of the people. The old customs, the sacred superstitions, many articles of the Native code, are rejected by the converts. They remain generally very submissive to the authority of their chief, pay their taxes, join the army, but, should the Authorities summon a "nyiwa," a gathering of the clan to smell out the witches, should statute labour be ordered for a Sunday, etc., their conscience does not allow them to obey. On the other hand Native converts, under their white missionary, generally form a Church, which sometimes becomes a kind of *imperium in imperio*, subject to its own laws. This is the necessary consequence of bad, or immoral, heathen customs (beer-drinking, lobola, polygamy) which the Christian ideal cannot tolerate. A deep gulf is thus created between Christians and heathens, and this also weakens the tribal life.

The causes which have brought about this change will probably increase in power in the course of time. The process of individualisation will go on; so consequently will this process of destruction of the tribal tie, and we may confidently look forward to a moment when the clan will have lost its political cohesion and its members have become independent of any Native Authority.

006 *e) Loss of the political sense.* How are we to regard this possibility? It may present certain advantages over the old state of things, but, to my mind, it entails a distinct and most regrettable loss for the Natives. The political sense, with the sense of responsibility, will have disappeared, and this sense is one of the most precious aids towards the building of character. Look at a gathering of old-fashioned indunas discussing a question affecting the welfare of the tribe under the guidance of their chief; compare it with an assembly of half civilised Natives in a Town location, a low class tea-meeting, for instance, of men with no respect for any one, addicted to drink and immorality, having rejected the authority of White missionaries because they believe themselves to be so much better informed! There was in the first gathering a dignity, a sense of duty, which you will hardly find in the second....

It is no use for us white men to curse the degenerate Native or to weep over the disappearance of the old restraints. Let us rather confess that we are in a great measure responsible for these results. We have interfered with the Bantu clan by taking away its independence; we have deprived it of one of its character building features, political

158 transported into the realm of divinity, thus giving rise to the true gods
758 and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives an explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself in the presence of a double psychological consciousness is well-known ; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine players unconsciously exert on their victims, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well calculated to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. It would however be going too far to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in
[797] those phenomena. There is one very striking fact which is a source of great wonder to the Natives. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who recount, with glowing eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever success they may have obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease, and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possession.

C. WITCHCRAFT.

789 I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of
754 the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. The French word *sorcier* and the English term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, lead to the same misconception. In order to avoid errors it is, I think, imperative first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. The adjectives black and white are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thongas certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi* ; it consists of the